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# Economic and Social Council

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## Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its resumed substantive session of 1999

**(16 September, 26 October, 15 November and 16 December 1999)**

*Note*: The provisional texts of the resolutions and decisions are circulated herein for information. The final texts will be issued in *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 1* (E/1999/99).

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# Contents


| *Resolution number* | *Title* | *Agenda item* | *Date adopted* | *Page* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Resolutions** | | | |
| 1999/65 | Reconfiguration of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods into a Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (E/1999/43 and E/1999/L.48) | 13 (g) | 26 October 1999 | 3 |
| 1999/66 | Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the review of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its machinery (E/1999/L.61) | 7 (a) | 16 December 1999 | 6 |
| 1999/67 | Report of the Committee for Development Policy (E/1999/L.62) | 13 (a) | 16 December 1999 | 7 |
| *Decision number* | | | | |
| | **Decisions** | | | |
| 1999/210 F | Elections to subsidiary and related bodies of the Economic and Social Council (E/1999/SR.50 and 51)* | 8** | 15 November and 16 December 1999 | 9 |
| 1999/290 | Consideration of the graduation of the Republic of Maldives from the list of least developed countries (E/1999/118 and Corr.1) | 13 (a) | 26 October 1999 | 9 |
| 1999/291 | Election of the President of the Economic and Social Council for the year 2000 (E/1999/SR.48) | 1 | 26 October 1999 | 9 |
| 1999/292 | Withdrawal of consultative status of Christian Solidarity International (E/1999/SR.48) | 12 | 26 October 1999 | 9 |
| 1999/293 | Situation of human rights in East Timor (E/1999/23/Add.1, E/1999/L.59 and E/1999/SR.50) | 14 (h) | 15 November 1999 | 10 |
| 1999/294 | Participation of non-governmental organizations accredited to the World Summit for Social Development in the work of the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-eighth session (E/1999/L.60) | 12 | 15 November 1999 | 10 |
| 1999/295 | Report of the Secretary-General on the ninth meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters (E/1999/84 and E/1999/SR.51) | 13 (j) | 16 December 1999 | 11 |


* For decision 1999/210 A, see document E/1999/INF/2; for decisions 1999/210 B and 1999/210 C, see document E/1999/INF/2/Add.1; and for decisions 1999/210 D and 1999/210 E, see document E/1999/INF/2/Add.2.

** Item pertains to the agenda for the organizational session for 1999 of the Council.

# Resolutions

## 1999/65
## Reconfiguration of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods into a Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 1995/6 of 19 July 1995 on the role of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods in the development of a harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals for implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development contained in chapter 19 of Agenda 21,[1]

*Recalling also* its resolution 1997/3 B of 18 July 1997 whereby global harmonization of systems of classification and labelling of chemicals, *inter alia*, was given priority in the work programme of the Committee for the biennium 1997-1998,

*Noting with satisfaction* that the Committee, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization, has completed the elaboration of proposals for classification criteria concerning physical hazards,[2] except for the flammability of aerosols, on which work will continue into the next biennium,

*Aware* that the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, as focal point for health hazards and hazards to the environment, has also completed most of its tasks with respect to the classification criteria and has established a working group for criteria on mixtures, and that the International Labour Organization has established a working group for harmonization of chemical hazard communication systems,

*Aware also* that the Committee, the International Labour Organization and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, as focal points designated by the Coordinating Group for the Harmonization of Chemical Classification Systems of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, are expected to make available, through their cooperative efforts, by the year 2000, a globally harmonized hazard classification and compatible labelling system, including material safety data sheets and easily understandable symbols, in accordance with the objectives of paragraph 19.27 of chapter 19 of Agenda 21,

*Noting* that the Coordinating Group has prepared proposals for the implementation of the globally harmonized system,[3] consisting in reconfiguring the present Committee of Experts and extending its mandate to cover not only transport of dangerous goods but also implementation and updating of the globally harmonized system,

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[2] See ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/28/Add.3.

[3] See ST/SG/AC.10/1998/51.

*Noting also* that those proposals were endorsed by the Inter-sessional Group of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, at its third meeting (Yokohama, Japan, 1-4 December 1998), which requested the Coordinating Group to develop draft terms of reference, in cooperation with the Committee,

*Noting further* that the Committee agreed to the proposals of the Coordinating Group, subject to certain conditions,[4] and that draft terms of reference have been developed, accordingly, by the Coordinating Group,

*Recognizing* that reconfiguring the Committee in accordance with those proposals would be the most cost-effective and efficient option[5] for the implementation of the globally harmonized system, ensuring at the same time cooperation between various authorities and organizations concerned with the sound management of chemicals, harmonization between various regulatory systems and facilitation of trade,

1. *Decides* to reconfigure, as from 2001, the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and its Subcommittee into a Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, with one Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and a second Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, with terms of reference and arrangements as described in the annex below, and provided that the total meeting time does not exceed that currently allocated to the work of the Committee in a biennium;

2. *Invites* the reconfigured Committee and the Subcommittee on the Globally Harmonized System to endeavour, whenever possible, to work on a consensus basis;

3. *Invites* Member States interested in participating in the Subcommittee on the Globally Harmonized System to apply for membership at the latest by the end of 2000 so that the composition of the Subcommittee and of the reconfigured Committee may be decided at the organizational session for 2001 of the Economic and Social Council;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide, not later than 1 January 2001, adequate resources to the Transport Division of the Economic Commission for Europe and plan sessions of the Subcommittees and the reconfigured Committee for 2001 and 2002, as appropriate, in accordance with the arrangements outlined in the annex below.

## Annex

## Draft terms of reference and working arrangements for 2001-2002 of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and its Subcommittees

### 1. Draft terms of reference

1.1 Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

[4] See E/1999/43, para. 21.

[5] See ST/SG/AC.10/1998/51, annex, for various institutional options envisaged.

The reconfigured Committee shall deal with strategic issues rather than technical issues. It is not envisaged that it will review, change or revisit technical recommendations of the Subcommittees. Accordingly, its main functions shall be to:

(a) Approve the work programmes for the Subcommittees in the light of available resources;

(b) Coordinate strategic and policy directions in areas of shared interests and overlap;

(c) Give formal endorsement to the recommendations of the Subcommittees and provide the mechanism for channelling them to the Economic and Social Council;

(d) Facilitate and coordinate the smooth running of the Subcommittees.

1.2 Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The functions of the Subcommittee shall be to:

(a) Act as custodian of the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals, managing and giving direction to the harmonization process;

(b) Keep the system up to date, as necessary, considering the need to introduce changes to ensure its continued relevance and practical utility, and determining the need for and timing of the updating of technical criteria, while working with existing bodies, as appropriate;

(c) Promote understanding and use of the system and encourage feedback;

(d) Make the system available for worldwide use and application;

(e) Make guidance available on the application of the system, and on the interpretation and use of technical criteria to support consistency of application;

(f) Prepare work programmes and submit recommendations to the Committee.

1.3 Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

The Subcommittee replaces the existing Committee on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and its Subcommittee with the same terms of reference.[6]

## 2. Working arrangements for 2001-2002

The total number of meeting days shall not exceed that currently allocated to the Committee of Experts and its Subcommittee, namely, thirty-eight, with a maximum of three days for the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods/Globally Harmonized System and ten days for the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System (to be arranged by the secretariat after consultation with the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods/Globally Harmonized System and the Coordinating Group for the Harmonization of Chemical Classification Systems of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals.

*48th plenary meeting*
*26 October 1999*

[6] E/1996/97, paras. 166-175.

## 1999/66
## Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the review of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its machinery

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/55 of 30 July 1999 on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the review of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its machinery[7] and the comments thereon of the Secretary-General and the Administrative Committee on Coordination;[8]

2. *Notes* the measures under way to enhance the functioning of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its contribution to greater unity of purpose and programme coherence and impact within the United Nations system, and to reinforce, to that end, secretarial support to the Committee, through the Office for Inter-Agency Affairs, and invites the Committee to continue to improve its capacity for promoting inter-agency cooperation and complementarities within the United Nations system;

3. *Welcomes in particular* the recent initiatives taken by the Administrative Committee on Coordination, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, to strengthen its interactions with intergovernmental bodies, particularly the Economic and Social Council, and invites the Committee to consider ways in which its members, individually and collectively, can maximize their support to the Council in the exercise of its responsibilities for system-wide guidance and coordination;

4. *Reaffirms in particular* its appreciation for the efforts of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its standing machinery to assist the Economic and Social Council and the functional and regional commissions in their work, in particular in coordinating the follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, and encourages them and the United Nations system to pursue and deepen their efforts in this area;

5. *Invites* the Administrative Committee on Coordination to consider ways in which its annual reports can contribute to this effort by bringing to the attention of the Economic and Social Council, in a timely manner, major developments in United Nations bodies and organizations of system-wide interest, as well as steps taken by the Committee and its subsidiary machinery to enhance system-wide effectiveness, particularly as a follow-up to recommendations and directives of the General Assembly and the Council;

6. *Takes note* of the decision adopted by the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its second regular session of 1999 on United Nations staff security and safety,[9] and requests all States and organizations of the United Nations system to extend their full support to its objectives;

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[7] A/54/288.

[8] A/54/288/Add.1.

[9] See ACC/1999/20, annex.

7. *Invites* the Administrative Committee on Coordination to give special attention, in its annual overview report for 1999, to progress being made towards system-wide coordinated management of information, including the role and contribution of its Information Systems Coordination Committee, pursuant to recommendation B1 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit;[10]

8. *Also invites* the Administrative Committee on Coordination to continue to report on its deliberations concerning the recommendations by the Joint Inspection Unit in the context of its own reporting on its functioning and methods of work;

9. *Decides* to revert, in the context of its consideration of coordination questions, including Administrative Committee on Coordination annual overview reports, to the follow-up to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and the related comments of the Committee in the light of the outcome of further intergovernmental deliberations thereon, *inter alia*, by the governing bodies of the specialized agencies.

*51st plenary meeting*
*16 December 1999*

## 1999/67
## Report of the Committee for Development Policy

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 1998/46 of 31 July 1998, annex I, wherein it decided that the Council should decide on an appropriate work programme for the Committee for Development Policy,

*Recalling also* its resolution 1998/39 of 30 July 1998 on the status of the least developed countries and decision 1999/290 of 26 October 1999 on consideration of the graduation of Maldives from the list of the least developed countries,

*Recalling further* General Assembly resolutions 46/206 of 20 December 1991 and 52/210 of 18 December 1997 on the report of the Committee for Development Planning,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its first session,[11] the views contained therein regarding the criteria for the identification of the least developed countries and the recognition that vulnerability should be explicitly taken into account in the identification criteria for the least developed countries;[12]

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to facilitate an expert group meeting of members of the Committee for Development Policy in January/February 2000 in order to enable them to carry out the necessary diagnostic testing and simulations of the proposed criteria for the designation of least developed country status, in particular the economic vulnerability index (EVI), as contained in annex II of the report of the Committee, and to report to the Committee at its second session in April 2000;

3. *Requests* the expert group to review and analyse the format and content of the "vulnerability profiles" developed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, as identified in chapter III, section F, of the report of the Committee;

[10] See A/54/288, executive summary: objectives, conclusions and recommendations.

[11] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 13* (E/1999/33).

[12] Ibid., para. 117.

4. *Requests*, in this context, the Committee for Development Policy to continue its dialogue with other international organizations working on vulnerability issues, and encourages these organizations to communicate their views on the proposed economic vulnerability index to the Committee;

5. *Also requests* the Committee for Development Policy, on the basis of the report of the expert group, to recommend, as appropriate, revised criteria for the identification of the least developed countries for the consideration of the Economic and Social Council as soon as possible, but no later than its substantive session of 2000, so that the review and decision on the list of the least developed countries can be completed by the end of 2000;

6. *Further requests* the Committee for Development Policy to include in its report to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council in 2000 its views on the theme for the high-level segment of the Council in 2000, namely "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy";

7. *Requests* the Committee for Development Policy, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/206 of 22 December 1999, to collaborate in the preparation of a draft text of an international development strategy for the first decade of the new millennium.

*51st plenary meeting*
*16 December 1999*

# Decisions

## 1999/210 F
## Elections to subsidiary and related bodies of the Economic and Social Council

At its 50th and 51st plenary meetings, on 15 November and 16 December 1999, the Economic and Social Council took the following action with regard to postponed vacancies in its subsidiary and related bodies:

**Executive Board of the World Food Programme**

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/223, which provided for a new distribution of seats on the Board, the Council elected **France, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Mexico** and **Swaziland** for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2000.

The Council elected **Norway** to assume the term of office of **Denmark** for a term beginning on 1 January 2000 and expiring on 31 December 2001.

**Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting**

The Council elected **France** and **Malta** for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2000.

## 1999/290
## Consideration of the graduation of the Republic of Maldives from the list of least developed countries

At its 48th plenary meeting, on 26 October 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided to postpone the consideration of the graduation of the Republic of Maldives from the list of least developed countries until a report of the Committee for Development Policy had been submitted and the review of the vulnerability index had been completed.

## 1999/291
## Election of the President of the Economic and Social Council for the year 2000

At its 48th plenary meeting, on 26 October 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided that the date for election of the President of the Council for the year 2000 would be 27 January 2000.

## 1999/292
## Withdrawal of consultative status of Christian Solidarity International

At its 48th plenary meeting on 26 October 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided to withdraw the consultative status of the non-governmental organization Christian Solidarity International.

## 1999/293
## Situation of human rights in East Timor

At its 50th plenary meeting, on 15 November 1999, the Economic and Social Council:

(a) Took note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/S-4/1 of 27 September 1999,[13] and endorsed the Commission's call upon the Secretary-General to establish an international commission of inquiry, with adequate representation of Asian experts, in order, in cooperation with the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights and thematic rapporteurs, to gather and compile systematically information on possible violations of human rights and acts that might constitute breaches of international humanitarian law committed in East Timor since the announcement in January 1999 of the vote and to provide the Secretary-General with its conclusions with a view to enabling him to make recommendations on future actions, and to make the report of the commission of inquiry available to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-sixth session;

(b) Also took note of the decision of the Commission to request the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to carry out missions to East Timor and report on their findings to the Commission at its fifty-sixth session and, on an interim basis, to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, and to request the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a comprehensive programme of technical cooperation in the field of human rights, in cooperation with other United Nations activities, focusing especially on capacity-building and reconciliation with a view to a durable solution to the problems in East Timor.

## 1999/294
## Participation of non-governmental organizations accredited to the World Summit for Social Development in the work of the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-eighth session

At its 50th plenary meeting, on 15 November 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided, as an interim measure and in conformity with the provisions of paragraph 53 of its resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, to invite those non-governmental organizations that had been accredited to the World Summit for Social Development to attend the thirty-eighth session of the Commission for Social Development, provided that they had started the process of applying for consultative status in accordance with Council decision 1996/315 of 14 November 1996.

[13] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 3A* (E/1999/23/Add.1), chap. I.

## 1999/295
## Report of the Secretary-General on the ninth meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

At its 51st plenary meeting, on 16 December 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided to further postpone consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the ninth meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters[14] to its substantive session of 2000.

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[14] E/1999/84.